

KLARA ZETTERHOLM:

DISCOVERIES FROM VALDAESTI UMDAR

Exhibition 30/11/2023 - 23/12/2023

Opening Thursday 30 November 17.00 - 20.00

ISSUES is happy to present *Discoveries from Valdaesti Umdar*, an exhibition of new works by Stockholm-based artist Klara Zetterholm. On the wall, some twenty fragments reassemble the remnants of an exquisitely sculpted ornament, supposedly once adorning a dwelling in the fictitious archaeological site Valdaesti Umdar. Alongside you, a paleoanthropological figure named Ayla sits on a stool, also looking at the reliefs depicting scenes from a lost world, or one to come.

Klara works with faking and forging materials, motifs and historical narratives. The reliefs, newly made from plaster, appear ancient and stone-like due to a painted layer of patina. A strange hybrid of prehistoric, medieval and contemporary, even future motifs conjure familiarity yet have no historical or scientific accuracy. A three-headed beast appears alongside an alien. A castle alongside symbols found on our keyboards. Several bas-relief carvings and handprints on the reliefs reveal a second and third timeline, further complicating the historical narrative.

It is intuitive to search for meaning in motifs or a historical timeline to orient ourselves. Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* delves into the meaning or "signification" of everything around us. For Barthes, objects such as art or artifacts appear natural to their consumer as if what they say is eternal, true or necessary instead of arbitrary, made or contingent. Klara's reliefs embody this idea of manufactured sense. The timeline, impossible to uncover, speaks to Foucault's "heterochromia", an accumulated time divided from an abstract dimension of physics. Time as a collective abstract machine that questions a narrative of the past to invent other futures.

The figure *Ayla*, is the fourth in an ongoing sculptural series since 2020. It is inspired by the wax reconstructions of prehistoric humans at natural history museums. Dressed in a blend of contemporary sports equipment and what we think of as prehistoric clothing, *Ayla* is the model of a "healthy" lifestyle. Our idea of a natural way of life results from misconceptions about human evolution. Almost all information of early human life is lost to modernity so mythical narratives fill the gap. Archeology is evidence, but we can never be completely sure of what. Historical reconstructions are inevitably abstractions of both collective and individual imagination.

In the end, Valdaesti Umdar is a timeless and fictitious place filled with echoes from a distant past and a post-apocalyptic future. We look to wrench hidden systems of value from the reliefs and understand who *Ayla* might have been, but are left without answers, only a reflection of what progression and regression, evolution and reversion might look like instead.

The exhibition is accompanied by a text written by Svante Helmbaek Tirén, a writer, editor and curator focused on the history of architecture and decoration. Svante has published multiple books including *The Collection of Nature in History* with Clive Aslet at Bokförlaget Stolpe.

KLARA ZETTERHOLM b. 1991, lives and works in Stockholm.

Klara employs methods used in set and stage design to create fake narratives of archaeology and natural history. Ancient civilizations come to life in a fantasy built in styrofoam, spray paints and lacquers. The viewer is presented with stories told in relief symbols and pictures on fragments of architecture and statues. With close attention to detail, master craftsmanship and a rich imagery of alternative plants, animals and human life, Klara makes art that offers a chance to learn from a fake history and reflect on our own collective human journey.

Klara graduated from the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm, her MFA exhibition was awarded with a grant from the Bonnier foundation. Her recent exhibitions and presentations include *Downtown Issues II* at ISSUES, Stockholm (2023); *Liste Art Fair Basel* with *Suprainfinit* (2023); *Collected fragments* at Thomassen gallery, Gothenburg (2023); *The simple life, the still.*) at *Suprainfinit*, Budapest (2023); *Potpourri* at ISSUES, Stockholm (2022); a temporary exhibition at Odenplan's subway station in association with Kulturförvaltningen (2023); the MFA spring show at the Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm (2022), *Inside/Outside* at Coullisse gallery, Stockholm (2022); *CREAM* at Nordiska Kompaniet, Stockholm (2022); *Downtown Issues* at ISSUES, Stockholm (2021) and *Survival of the fittest* at Accelerator, Stockholm (2020).

SELECTED PRESS

[Med dragning till det arkeologiska](#) (review), Alba.nu, 10/03/2023

[Masterclass, Kungliga konsthögskolans magisterstudenter överglänser det mesta](#) (review), Petersson, Frans Josef. Kunstkritikk, 25/05/2022

[Konsthögskolans Masterutställning](#) (review), Fur Rundgren, Windy. Konsten.net, 25/05/2022

[Kungl. Konsthögskolans avgångsutställningar](#) (review), Mattsson, Leif. Omkonst, 25/05/2022



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

Ayla, 2023

Mannequin, synthetic clay, acrylics, fur, faux fur, textile, string, leather, faux leather, clogs, wood, stone, seashell, horn, earphones, electric cords, ski mask, beads and a red fox stole

130 x 90 cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

3D7XA-1, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

43 x 19 cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

2V7-2, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

38 x 26cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

2U-3, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

44 x 32cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

2MVU-4, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

35 x 30cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

1MBA-5, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

23 x 26 cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

27XA-6, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

50 x 47 cm

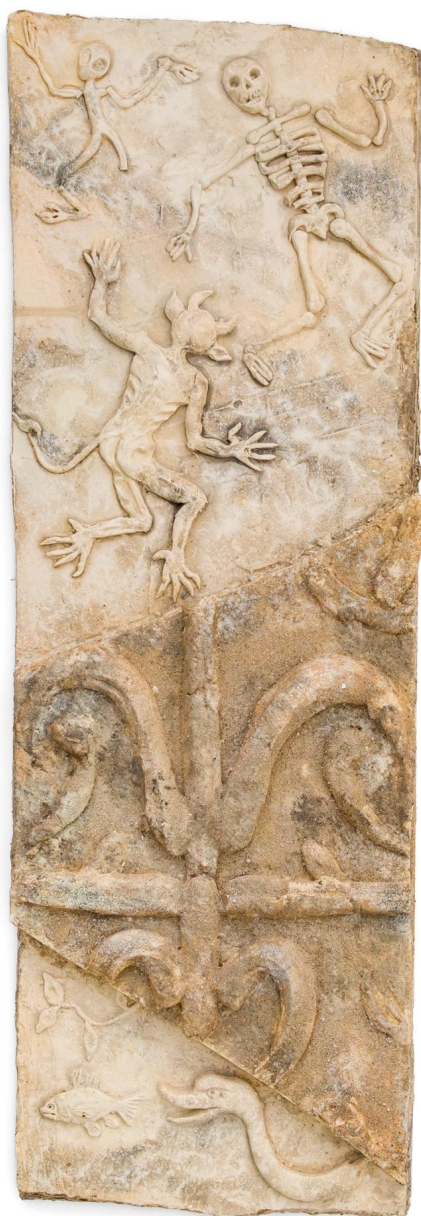


KLARA ZETTERHOLM

2BV-7, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

62 x 48cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

2DM7U-8, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

54 x 18cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

1D7A-9, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster
29 x 19cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

17XAD-10, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster
40 x 28cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

3MA-11, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

26 x 15cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

3DM7XA-12, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster
50 x 33cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

2D7A-13, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

21 x 17cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

2DXA-14, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

21 x 19cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

1MB-15, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

28 x 25cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

2DV-16, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

20 x 27cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

3MV-17, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

42 x 31cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

3DV7XA-18, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

37 x 27cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

2D7A-19, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster

75 x 33cm



KLARA ZETTERHOLM

3V7BA-20, 2023

Pigment, acrylics, sand, varnish and synthetic clay on plaster
50 x 40cm